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PROVISIONAL VERBATIM RECORD OF THE THREE THOUSAND THREE HUNDRED AND TWENTY-FIFTH MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Wednesday, 22 December 1993, at 6.15 p.m.

President:	Mr. LI Zhaoxing	(China)
Members:	Brazil	Mr. SARDENBERG
	Cape Verde	Mr. CUSTODIO dos SANTOS
	Djibouti	Mr. OLHAYE
	France	Mr. MERIMEE
	Hungary	Mr. ERDÖS
	Japan	Mr. MARUYAMA
	Morocco	Mr. BENJELLOUN-TOUIMI
	New Zealand	Mr. KEATING
	Pakistan	Mr. MARKER
	Russian Federation	Mr. VORONTSOV
	Spain	Mr. YAÑEZ BARNUEVO
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Sir David HANNAY
	United States of America	Mr. WALKER
	Venezuela	Mr. TAYLHARDAT

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93-87471 (E)

The meeting was called to order at 6.30 p.m.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

The agenda was adopted.

THE SITUATION IN GEORGIA

LETTER DATED 16 DECEMBER 1993 FROM THE SECRETARY-GENERAL ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL (S/26901)

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Chinese): I should like to inform the Council that I have received a letter from the representative of Georgia in which he requests to be invited to participate in the discussion of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite that representative to participate in the discussion without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Chkheidze (Georgia) took a place at the Council table.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Chinese): The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The Security Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

Members of the Council have before them document S/26901, which contains the text of a letter dated 16 December 1993 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council.

Members of the Council also have before them document S/26909, which contains the text of a draft resolution prepared in the course of the Council's prior consultations.

(The President)

I should like to draw the attention of the members of the Council to the following other documents: S/26843, letter dated 3 December 1993 from the Permanent Representative of Italy to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General; S/26856, letter dated 3 December 1993 from the Permanent Representative of Belgium to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council; and S/26875, letter dated 9 December 1993 from the Permanent Representative of Georgia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, transmitting the text of a letter dated 8 December 1993 from the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Georgia addressed to the Secretary-General.

The first speaker is the representative of Georgia, and I now call on him.

Mr. CHKHEIDZE (Georgia) (interpretation from Russian): The draft resolution under consideration raises to a new level the efforts of the international community and opens the way to further development of the peace process.

Consideration of this question, including the comments made and the support for those comments, reflects the aspiration to reinforce the first results of the negotiation process. We cannot allow this process to be frozen, despite the intention of the Abkhaz side to carry out, on the territory of the autonomous Republic, a referendum on the future political system of Abkhazia. Naturally, we favour the free expression of the will of the people of the autonomous Republic, but after the restoration of justice and the return of the refugees, to which we aspire so much.

I have asked to speak to convey, on behalf of the leadership of the Republic, our gratitude for the efforts the Council has been making to achieve a peaceful settlement of the Abkhaz problem. For more than a year now, it has been claiming lives, wreaking havoc

(Mr. Chkheidze, Georgia)

with the destiny of people and threatening regional stability. It is one of those bloody links in the chain of events on which the attention of the Security Council is now focused.

I should like to convey to the Council the expressions of gratitude of hundreds of thousands of dispossessed refugees. They are given hope by the fairness reflected in the decisions of the Security Council and by the objectivity of the United Nations leadership in assessing the existing situation. The lives of many people and, most important, of innocent children have been saved by humanitarian assistance. The words of gratitude of my people are addressed to the States and to the international organizations which have responded to the Security Council's appeal for emergency humanitarian assistance.

The only path to a settlement is that which the leadership of Georgia sees in the negotiating process. It is well known that we participated in these negotiations even after previous agreements had been violated. It is also well known that this conflict was imposed on Georgia and that it is by no means an ethnic conflict. Such an understanding of the events would be an oversimplication. The conflict has a clearly expressed political basis.

Destabilization is the most effective method of struggling against democracy. Stability is a threat to those forces that are striving for political power through the use of violence and that are enriching themselves through trade and weapons, through pillage and robbery. All peaceful efforts will encounter vehement resistance by these forces, but there can be no retreat from such efforts. We hope that today's decision of the Security Council will become one more authoritative reaffirmation of this policy.

We hope also that the efforts of the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, and his Special Envoy,

(Mr. Chkheidze, Georgia)

Mr. Edouard Brunner, will achieve positive results in the development of the process of peaceful negotiations. We wish to take particular note of the active and comprehensive assistance rendered by Russia.

The leadership of the Republic of Georgia expresses the hope that, in order to achieve these objectives, the United Nations in the very near future will expand its presence in the territory of the region, including armed peace-keeping forces and civilian experts.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Chinese): I thank the representative of Georgia for the kind words he addressed to me.

(The President)

It is my understanding that the Council is ready to proceed to the vote on the draft resolution before it (S/26909).

If I hear no objection, I shall put the draft resolution to the vote.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

A vote was taken by show of hands.

In favour: Brazil, Cape Verde, China, Djibouti, France, Hungary, Japan, Morocco, New Zealand, Pakistan, Russian Federation, Spain, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Venezuela

The PRESIDENT: There were 15 votes in favour. The draft resolution has therefore been adopted unanimously as resolution 892 (1993).

I shall now call on those members of the Council who wish to make statements following the voting.

Mr. MERIMEE (France) (interpretation from French): My delegation welcomes the decision just taken by our Council.

Just as, immediately following the violation of the Sochi Agreement, the Council reduced the strength of the United Nations Observer Mission in Georgia (UNOMIG), today, in the light of the encouraging results of the Geneva negotiations, the Council is confirming the readiness of the United Nations to make its contribution as soon as the parties prove their willingness to make progress towards a political settlement of the conflict.

In addition to the 10 observers who will be deployed immediately, we would like the Secretariat to deploy as quickly as possible the maximum number of observers within the limit of 50 authorized by this resolution.

We await the results of the next round of negotiations, to be held on 11 January, and the continuation of the discussions

(Mr. Merimée, France)

undertaken in Moscow on 15 and 16 December on the modalities of a political solution.

In this connection, my delegation wishes to emphasize that, even though the first meeting of experts in Moscow did not produce immediate results, the fact that the parties began to discuss the core of the problem is in itself a positive factor.

If further progress is achieved in the coming weeks, France, together with a number of delegations directly concerned, and in close coordination with the Secretariat and the parties, will not fail to propose new forms of action to our Council.

Mr. VORONTSOV (Russian Federation) (interpretation from Russian): The delegation of the Russian Federation has supported the resolution just adopted by the Security Council, authorizing an increase in the strength of the United Nations Observer Mission in Georgia up to 50 additional military observers, in the belief that this is the first step in United Nations assistance in the implementation of the Memorandum of Understanding signed by the parties on 1 December this year.

We believe that, with the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding, once again - as was the case after the Sochi cease-fire Agreement of 27 July this year - a real opportunity has emerged to achieve a political settlement to the Abkhaz conflict. Of course, if this opportunity is to be seized, the most energetic efforts of the United Nations in support of the progress made in resolving the conflict will be required.

The Russian Federation believes that progress towards a political settlement should be accompanied by the deployment in Abkhazia, Republic of Georgia, of a full-fledged United Nations operation, which would include both a military and a substantive

(Mr. Vorontsov, Russian Federation)

civilian component and would cover the entire territory of Abkhazia, Republic of Georgia.

Of great significance in this connection is the provision of the resolution to the effect that the Security Council takes note of the intention of the Secretary-General to plan and prepare for a possible further expansion of the United Nations Observer Mission in Georgia. Of significance also is the readiness expressed by the Council to review the existing mandate of UNOMIG in the light of the report by the Secretary-General that is due at the end of January 1994.

As is clear from the present stage of the situation in the Abkhaz conflict, of highest priority are questions of respect for human rights, the return of the refugees, the restoration of legality and law and order, and the cessation of violence. We are gratified that in the resolution just adopted due attention has been paid to these issues.

We fully share the view of the fact-finding mission of the Secretary-General in the area of human rights violations in Abkhazia, Republic of Georgia, which in its report noted that

> "The presence of representatives of international organizations may be helpful in the restoration of guarantees for the protection of the civilian population." (S/26795, para. 61)

It also emphasized in its report that

> "Human rights monitors placed in Abkhazia could make an important contribution in this regard." (Ibid.)

We hope that during the upcoming review of the mandate of the United Nations Observer Mission in Georgia this important recommendation will be taken into account.

(Mr. Vorontsov, Russian Federation)

It is obvious that international support commensurate with the scale and intensity of the conflict requires a significant strengthening not only of the military but also of political, humanitarian and other types of United Nations presence in Abkhazia, Republic of Georgia.

For its part, the Russian Federation reaffirms its readiness to make its contribution to the peace-keeping activities of the United Nations in the region of the Abkhaz conflict and in particular to render assistance to the Secretary-General in ensuring the security of United Nations personnel.

Mr. RICHARDSON (United Kingdom): The further phased deployment of United Nations Observer Mission in Georgia (UNOMIG) observers to Abkhazia in the Republic of Georgia, authorized by the resolution which we have just adopted, is another clear signal of the international community's concern for the situation in Georgia. The mandate is designed to give UNOMIG the opportunity to make a practical contribution to the implementation of the Memorandum of Understanding signed in Geneva on 1 December. It applies to the whole area of Abkhazia, not only to the town of Sukhumi or to the present dividing line between the forces of the two sides, along the Inguri River.

As in all peace-keeping operations, the security of United Nations personnel is a very real concern for my Government: we therefore welcome the expressed willingness of the Government of the Russian Federation to assist in ensuring the security of UNOMIG personnel, and are happy that this is reflected in the resolution.

This further deployment of military observers is also a clear signal of the international community's support for the negotiating process started in Geneva under United Nations auspices and in the presence of the Council on Security and Cooperation in Europe

(Mr. Richardson, United Kingdom)

(CSCE), and the Russian Federation as facilitator. It is vital that both sides now abide by the cease-fire and seize the opportunity offered to restore peace and establish a lasting political settlement. My Government will do all it can to assist in that process. It hopes that the parties will heed the message of this resolution and engage in further constructive negotiations when they meet in January. As the Secretary-General has made clear, a further deployment of UNOMIG, beyond that authorized in this resolution, and up to the strength originally envisaged for the Mission, must depend on progress at the negotiating table.

(Mr. Richardson, United Kingdom)

Finally, may I note that the resolution rightly draws attention to the humanitarian situation in Georgia. United Nations assistance to that country is not and should not be confined to the provision of military observers. We have all been moved by the plight of the civilian population there as a result of the fighting of the past year. The United Kingdom will continue its efforts to alleviate the plight of the refugees. We have already responded to the United Nations inter-agency consolidated appeal for Georgia, and we stand ready to consider further assistance.

Mr. ERDOS (Hungary) (interpretation from French): By voting in favour of resolution 892 (1993), Hungary has reaffirmed its commitment to a political solution of the conflict in Abkhazia, Republic of Georgia. We welcome the readiness of both the Georgian and the Abkhazian parties to engage in negotiations for a comprehensive political settlement of the crisis. In our view, the expansion of the international presence in the conflict zone, requested by the parties and authorized by today's resolution, can only help stabilize the situation and create conditions favourable to negotiations. We note with satisfaction the conclusions drawn by the Secretary-General from an analysis of present developments, according to which encouraging progress towards lasting peace in the region has been achieved, as well as the decision to hold a new round of negotiations next month.

Hungary attaches great importance to the activities in Georgia of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE), which are based on decisions taken at the recent ministerial meeting of the CSCE in Rome. On the situation in Georgia, the Ministers of the CSCE countries stressed that the territorial integrity and sovereignty of the Republic of Georgia must be

(Mr. Erdös, Hungary)

safeguarded. That is fully in line with the position the Security Council adopted on this subject in resolution 876 (1993) of 19 October. The Ministers, further, undertook to strengthen CSCE efforts to stabilize the situation in the country. These efforts cover a number of areas, including human rights and assistance for the development in Georgia of legal and democratic institutions and processes; they can be an invaluable contribution to solving outstanding problems. In this undertaking, the enhancement and strengthening of cooperation between the United Nations and the CSCE in Georgia could bring us closer to a settlement of the conflict and increase the effectiveness of efforts to that end.

We appeal to the signatories of the Memorandum of Understanding signed at the beginning of this month to step up their efforts to bring the Republic of Georgia out of the present situation and, on the basis of the relevant Security Council resolutions and CSCE decisions, to settle all their differences.

Mr. GREY (United States of America): We favour the phased expansion of the United Nations Observer Mission in Georgia (UNOMIG) to a total of 55 observers. With such an expansion the United Nations lends practical support to the progress the parties have achieved in the negotiations under the auspices of the Secretary-General's Special Representative, Ambassador Brunner, in their signing of the Memorandum of Understanding on 1 December. This expansion is in keeping with the intention of resolution 881 (1993), which took as its guidelines for further development an evaluation of the situation on the ground and in the negotiating process.

We hope that, as negotiations resume on 11 January, the parties will be able to confirm the progress they have begun so

(Mr. Grey, United States)

positively. Among the many issues the negotiators will face is that of a formal cease-fire. We hope the parties will build upon their agreement not to use force during the period of the negotiations and will agree in substance and in detail on the framework for a formal cease-fire with which UNOMIG can interact, as was its original function.

We look forward to the Secretary-General's report, expected in late January. We hope that he will be able to address specifically and in detail the tasks which UNOMIG is performing and that he will evaluate whether and to what degree UNOMIG might resume more traditional observer functions in the light of the situation on the ground and in the negotiations. We would also welcome his estimate of the costs and his evaluation of the time in which UNOMIG might be able to accomplish its mission.

Mr. SARDENBERG (Brazil): Like most of the international community, the Brazilian Government was dismayed by the turn of events that, last September, shook the peace process in Abkhazia, Republic of Georgia, rendering inapplicable the original mandate of the United Nations Observer Mission in Georgia (UNOMIG). At that time, even in the face of very difficult circumstances, the Security Council did not give up the hope that a negotiated settlement to the conflict could be achieved. The international community remained ready to do its share in contributing to that goal, as demonstrated by the continued presence of UNOMIG and the prospect of a continuous review of its new, more modest, mandate. That was the thrust of resolution 881 (1993), which was adopted unanomously by the Council.

(Mr. Sardenberg, Brazil)

The signing on 1 December by the Government of Georgia and the Abkhazian side of a Memorandum of Understanding proved the approach of the Council to have been correct. That most welcome development deserved to be appropriately acknowledged, as the Council has done today by adopting resolution 892 (1993).

We commend the diplomatic efforts of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Ambassador Edouard Brunner, who has been instrumental in the progress attained so far. We also recognize the very useful role played by the Government of the Russian Federation as facilitator of the peace process.

By authorizing the phased deployment of up to 50 additional military observers to UNOMIG, the Council once more signifies its readiness to remain directly seized of the matter and to respond promptly - but in a commensurate way and after having taken stock of new developments - to real progress achieved by the parties towards a comprehensive political settlement.

The deployment of United Nations personnel to areas of conflict is always a delicate matter, and one that deserves to be considered with great caution and care. In the case of Georgia, that need is further accentuated by two important elements: the involvement of the regional organization - the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe - and the presence in the area of military personnel from a third party.

As a member of the Security Council, Brazil will continue to consider events in the Abkhazian region of Georgia with interest and attention and will be ready to work with other delegations on further measures that may be necessary to support the peace process, on the basis of the recommendations to be submitted in due course by the Secretary-General.

Mr. MARUYAMA (Japan): Japan welcomes the fact that there has been some progress in the political dialogue on the situation in Abkhazia, Republic of Georgia. Like other countries, Japan attaches particular importance to the recent signing of the Memorandum of Understanding, which was a tangible result of the combined efforts of Mr. Brunner, the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE), and the Russian Federation as facilitator.

(Mr. Maruyama, Japan)

The resolution we have adopted today demonstrates the position of the Council very clearly. First, it reflects our belief that the Memorandum of Understanding will be, and must be, implemented fully. Secondly, as the situation still involves some uncertainty, it establishes that the Council must take a step-by-step approach in providing assistance, and must keep UNOMIG under constant review. The Council should be kept fully informed of any developments, as this is the only way to ensure the practical review due at the end of January next year.

I urge the parties to heed this message and to demonstrate the maximum political will to achieve a comprehensive settlement of the conflict. It remains for them to honour their own commitments; the Council can only help them to move ahead. Once again, the success of the peace process depends primarily on the good and constructive will of the parties.

Finally, I wish to stress that there are several factors which I think are minimum preconditions to effective United Nations assistance, some of which are properly reflected in this resolution. First, the safety of UNOMIG personnel and humanitarian relief workers must be ensured. Secondly, the provision of humanitarian assistance should be facilitated. Thirdly, the violation of humanitarian law must immediately and unconditionally cease. Japan continues to monitor these aspects of the situation carefully and is looking forward to a better climate, one which will promote a just and lasting peace in the area.

Mr. YAÑEZ-BARNUEVO (Spain) (interpretation from Spanish): On several occasions in the course of the past few months, the Security Council has expressed grave concern over the deterioration

(Mr. Yañez Barnuevo, Spain)

of the situation in Abkhazia, Republic of Georgia. Today we have been able to adopt a resolution which is part of a more encouraging picture after the signing in Geneva, on 1 December last, of a Memorandum of Understanding between the Georgian and Abkhaz parties.

With resolution 892 (1993), the Council gives its support, by the phased dispatch of up to 50 military observers to the region, to the peace process initiated in Geneva under the auspices of the United Nations and the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE), with the assistance of the Russian Federation, a process which we hope will lead to the full restoration of peace in Abkhazia and to a political solution to the problems underlying this conflict.

It is now up to the parties to make their commitment to the negotiating process a reality and to renounce the use of force once and for all. The resolution just adopted leaves no doubt in this regard, since it insists on compliance both with the Memorandum of Understanding signed in Geneva and with the Sochi Agreements of 27 July this year, which were violated by the Abkhaz party, as previous resolutions of the Security Council have pointed out.

The Council must follow closely the developments in the negotiating process, which will continue in mid-January in Geneva, since the increase in the United Nations presence in the region - which the parties themselves believe would contribute to maintaining and consolidating peace - will depend on the progress that is achieved.

As was expressed in a statement by the European Union, of which Spain is a member, this negotiating process should lead to a

(Mr. Yañez Barnuevo, Spain)

political solution within the context of the existing international boundaries. The European Union has also insisted on the need for the parties to respect the principles of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe as well as those of humanitarian law.

In this regard, I wish to express the concern of the Spanish delegation over the situation of tens of thousands of refugees and persons who have been displaced as a result of the conflict. It is urgent therefore that the necessary conditions be created for the return of refugees and displaced persons to their places of origin on a voluntary basis and in a climate of security. In like manner, all those who require it should have unimpeded access to the humanitarian assistance intended for the victims of the conflict.

There is reason for hope. We trust therefore that in the next few weeks the Secretary-General will be able to report on progress achieved in the peace process, which will enable this Council to continue to act concretely and effectively to assist Georgia in attaining normalcy.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Chinese): There are no further speakers.

The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The meeting rose at 7.05 p.m.